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# Job Opportunities

## in the Food and Nutrition Service



# *The Food and Nutrition Service Has a Career for You*

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The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is on the front line in the Nation's effort to provide food assistance to those Americans in greatest need.

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), FNS runs the Food Stamp Program, the Child Nutrition Programs, and the Special Nutrition Programs that get food and health information directly to America's poor, elderly, and children. FNS is responsible for more than a quarter of USDA's total budget.

To do its job, FNS needs people with many different kinds of skills to perform as program specialists, clerk-typists and secretaries, contract and computer experts, nutritionists and food technologists, personnel and information specialists, and many more. FNS employees work at the agency's headquarters just outside Washington, DC, in Northern Virginia, or at one of seven regional offices and more than 80 field offices around the country and U.S. territories.

If you have talent in one of the following areas, there could be a job for you at FNS—along with the satisfaction of knowing you're helping bring the Nation's most direct assistance programs to those most in need.

# ***What the Positions Are***

## ***Positions in Program Administration***

**Program Specialists:** About half of the people who work for FNS are program specialists. They are the primary people who see that FNS programs work the way they should to deliver help effectively. Program specialists come from many different backgrounds, including science, administration, law, politics, education, government, and other fields. The duties of program specialists vary widely, but the things they often work on include:

- writing regulations that the programs use in their daily operations.
- helping States run the programs, including helping to train State and local personnel.
- analyzing the programs to find ways to make them more efficient and effective.

**Food Stamp Investigators:** An important part of keeping the programs efficient and effective is ensuring that they are run according to the law. Food stamp investigators travel extensively, checking on any possible violation of the laws or regulations. Many investigators come from backgrounds in law enforcement, the military, administration, or other fields.

**Program Analysts:** Monitoring the effectiveness of FNS programs today while considering new possibilities for tomorrow, program analysts look closely at how the programs work.

They analyze research findings and legislative proposals to develop policy options for ways FNS could be more effective in the future. Program analysts may have backgrounds in administration, economics, law, politics, government, or other fields.



## ***Positions in Management***

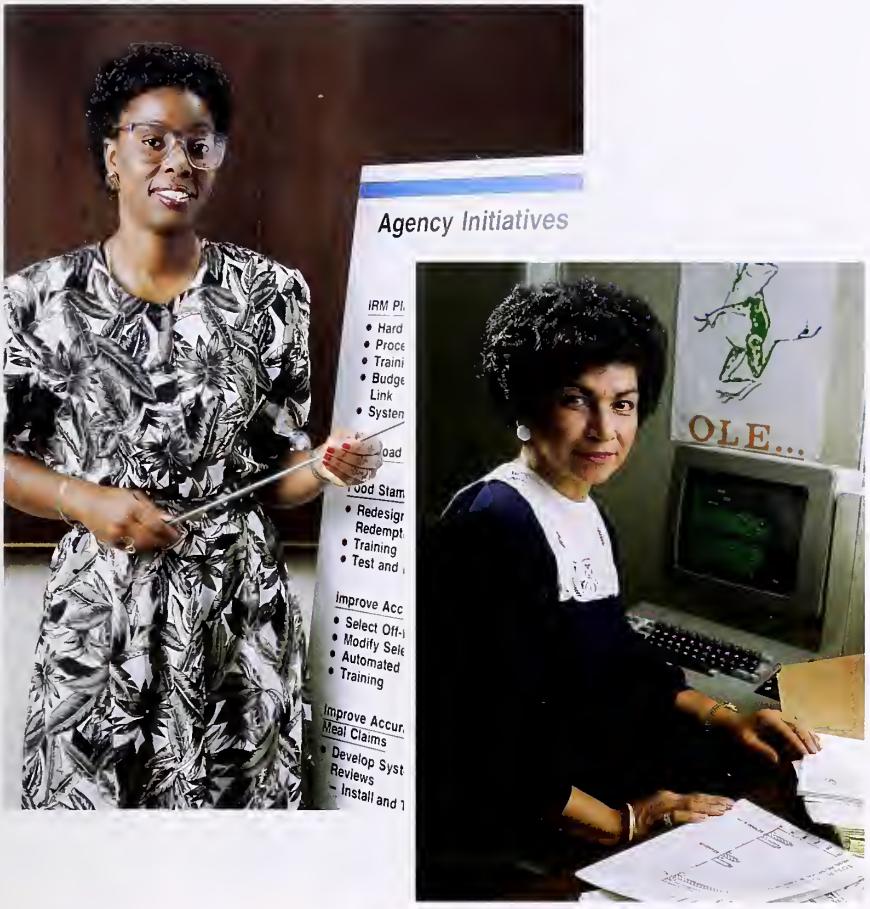
**Accountants:** FNS accountants make sure the tax dollars that support the programs are spent as they were intended. They must know governmental accounting principles and standards and, like accountants everywhere, they must be able to make the numbers add up to explain what was spent and why.

**Financial Analysts:** FNS programs must have money to operate, and financial analysts are the pipeline for the agency's funds. They look at what each program spends and estimate what the ongoing costs will be. They take their numbers to the Secretary of Agriculture and the President to request funding for the programs, and to Congress to justify their requests.

**Computer Specialists:** The computer is everywhere today, and the Federal Government is no exception. FNS uses its up-to-date equipment for dozens of different jobs, from accounting to publishing. Computer specialists find new and better ways to put both hardware and software to work to help FNS do its job.

**Information Specialists:** FNS information specialists are the agency's link to the public, either directly or through the news media. Information specialists use brochures, photographs, videotapes, and many other ways to bring information to those who use or need information about FNS programs.





**Personnel Specialists:** FNS is proud of its programs and of the people who run them. Personnel specialists perform the essential job of finding, training, and keeping top-quality staff people at every level. They also handle the employee retirement plan, health and life insurance programs, employee grievances, awards, and other benefit programs.

**Management Analysts:** Always looking for ways to make FNS more effective, management analysts study and make recommendations about better work methods, organization, use of personnel, delegation of authority, and information and documentation systems.

**Contract Specialists:** Contract specialists obtain for the agency the goods and services it needs to do its work, be it an indepth study of the effects of program benefits or state-of-the-art computer equipment. Working with both the private sector and other Government agencies, contract specialists negotiate the price, purchase, and delivery arrangements, and pay the bills.

**Technical Support:** In addition to these specialist positions, FNS employs personnel assistants, computer aides, accounting technicians and other support personnel.



## ***Positions in Nutrition***

**Nutritionists, Food Technologists, Home Economists:** At FNS, Nutrition is our middle name. As experts in nutrition, these are the people who perform duties which are essential to all FNS programs. They advise the programs on everything from recipes to highly technical scientific issues; they develop nutrition education materials; and they keep in close touch with the latest developments in nutrition research.

## ***Positions in Office Management***

Secretaries and typists play a key role in keeping the day-to-day operations of FNS running smoothly. Without their help, the agency couldn't deliver on its commitment to provide better food and nutrition for all Americans.

## What's in it for You?



### **Good Pay**

The Government classifies its employees from grade (GS)-1 through 18, depending on performance, training, experience, and duties. Most of the professional and administrative positions described in this pamphlet are filled at the GS-5 or GS-7 level, depending on the position and the academic record of the candidate. Clerk-typist positions are filled at GS-2, GS-3, or GS-4, and secretarial and technical support jobs at GS-3 through GS-6.

A typical professional or administrative employee would start as a GS-5. With a year of experience, he or she could move up to a GS-7. Entry-level jobs for clerical and secretarial workers normally range from GS-2 to GS-4. In large metropolitan areas, including Washington, DC, special pay rates are in effect for many clerical and secretarial workers.

### **Opportunities for Advancement**

Many people in responsible positions at FNS came into the agency in entry-level jobs and have taken on greater and greater responsibility as they have gained experience. Those who add training and education to their experience can progress more quickly, or even move into new professional areas. Most professional and administrative positions have promotion potential to the GS-9 or GS-11 level, based on performance, experience, and education. There are many opportunities to move into administrative and management positions beyond GS-11.

## **Benefits**

The Federal Government is an excellent employer. Benefits include 13 days paid vacation during the first 3 years, 20 days from 3 to 15 years, and 26 days after 15 years. In addition to vacation time, there are 10 Federal holidays each year. Government workers earn 13 days of sick leave per year, which can be used for medical and dental appointments as well as during illness or injury. Sick leave is carried over from year to year as a hedge against prolonged illness or injury. In addition, employees have varied options in selecting health insurance, life insurance, and retirement plans.

## **Training**

FNS provides excellent opportunities for specialized training through its own facilities and through outside resources. Career guidance and on- and off-the-job training programs are tailored to the individual employee's needs. Training programs are designed not only to help employees do their present jobs better, but also to prepare them for more responsible jobs.



## ***Do You Qualify?***

The jobs mentioned in this pamphlet which are filled at the GS-5 level require one of the following:

- a 4-year college degree OR
- three years of experience in administrative, professional, technical, investigative, or other responsible work OR
- some suitable combination of work experience and education.

The jobs mentioned which are filled at the GS-7 level require one of the following in addition to the requirements above:

- one year of graduate-level education or law school OR
- superior academic achievement (3.0 grade-point average) OR
- one year of appropriate experience equivalent to the GS-5 level OR
- some suitable combination of work experience and education.

Entry-level clerical and secretarial jobs require a high school diploma or 3 to 12 months of suitable experience. Applicants for these jobs must also have an eligible notice of rating on the Clerical Examination. Information about the examination is available from your nearest Office of Personnel Management Federal Job Information Center, or from the FNS personnel office nearest you.



# *How To Apply*

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*The basic application form for Federal employment is Standard Form 171 (SF-171). The FNS personnel offices listed below can provide a form, along with information on available positions and how to start the application process.*

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**National Headquarters**  
Personnel Division  
3101 Park Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22302

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Northeast Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
10 Causeway Street  
Boston, MA 02222-1062

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Mid-Atlantic Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
Mercer Corporate Park  
CN 02150  
Trenton, NJ 08650

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Southeast Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
77 Forsyth Street, SW  
Atlanta, GA 30303

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Midwest Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
50 East Washington Street  
Chicago, IL 60602

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Southwest Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
1100 Commerce Street  
Dallas, TX 75242

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Mountain Plains Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
1244 Speer Boulevard  
Denver, CO 80204

Food and Nutrition Service, USDA  
**Western Regional Office**  
Personnel Office  
550 Kearney Street  
San Francisco, CA 94108

*The nearest Office of Personnel Management Federal Job Information Center can also provide information and copies of the SF-171.*

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## **The Food and Nutrition Service's Programs**

- Food Stamp Program
- Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
- National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs
- Food Distribution Program
- Child Care Food Program
- Summer Food Service Program

**FNS is strongly committed to equal employment opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, handicap, or any nonmerit factor. The goal of FNS is to have a diverse work force that reflects the American population.**

United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service

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## **Years of Helping**

The Food and Nutrition Service is proud of its years of service to children and the needy. In that time, FNS has helped countless Americans toward better health through better nutrition.

We need top people to help keep these important programs moving forward. No matter what your talent, if you feel a commitment to help those most in need, FNS would like to hear from you. Write or call one of the offices listed. There may be a place for you on our team.

